

February 7, 2003

The Honorable Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr.  
Governor, State of Maryland  
State House  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Ehrlich:

The County Council urges you and our Congressional Delegation to solicit design and construction funding authorization for two 'new starts' in the upcoming federal transit funding reauthorization: the Inner Purple Line, a light rail line from Bethesda to New Carrollton; and the Corridor Cities Transitway, a busway or light rail line from Shady Grove to Clarksburg.

The Inner Purple Line will connect four legs of the Metrorail System, three MARC lines, AMTRAK, the University of Maryland, and the communities of Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Silver Spring, Langley Park, College Park, Riverdale Park, and New Carrollton. It will provide needed congestion relief and promote revitalization of the business and residential communities through which it passes, and will provide much improved access for working families and college students who have no alternative form of transportation.

The Corridor Cities Transitway will serve the communities of Shady Grove, Gaithersburg, Germantown, and Clarksburg. It is an integral part of the master plans for these communities. These plans rely on the Corridor Cities Transitway to provide an anchor for transit-oriented development in this portion of the I-270 High Technology Corridor.

We are impressed with how Maryland Transit Administration and its consultants have designed these lines with considerable thought and sensitivity as to how they would fit within their surroundings. We are open to still further measures to mitigate perceived impacts, as long as the cost of these measures do not hurt each project's chance to receive construction funding authorization in the next federal transportation bill.

Both projects have been under study by the MTA for years. Final Environmental Impact Statements for both the Corridor Cities Transitway and the Bethesda-to-Silver Spring portion of the Inner Purple Line will be completed by the end of this year. *Therefore, if federal and State funds were available on a timely basis, both projects should break ground within the next four years.* To our knowledge there are no other rail lines or busways in Maryland that could go under construction within that time frame.

As you no doubt know, both projects enjoy substantial majority support among State, County, and municipal elected officials, and among business, civic, and environmental groups as well. These are two projects that will greatly enhance the economy and quality of life of citizens in our region, which suffers far more from traffic congestion than anywhere else in Maryland. These are two projects that exist not as mere concepts, but as fully developed plans that can become reality in the here and now. Please do all you can to help these plans to be realized.

Sincerely,

Michael L. Subin  
Council President

MLS:go

Copies: The Honorable Albert Wynn, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Christopher Van Hollen, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Steny Hoyer, U.S. House of Representatives  
The Honorable Paul Sarbanes, United States Senate  
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski, United States Senate  
The Honorable Ida Ruben, Chair, Montgomery County Senate Delegation  
The Honorable Charles Barkley, Chair, Montgomery County House Delegation  
The Honorable Douglas Duncan, Montgomery County Executive  
Derick Berlage, Chair, Montgomery County Planning Board